

INSIDE

2

**Accountability Demands
Leaders Capable of
Meeting Challenges**

3

**Summer Team
Building Institute**

3

IPLA Staff News

3

IPLA Live!

4

**Principals of
Differentiation**

5

Technology Tip

5

Quote Corner

6

Four Blocks

7

IPLA Alumni Message

7

Books for Leaders

7

**Where in the World
is IPLA?**



Accountability Demands Leaders Capable of Meeting Challenges

The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy Graduates Meet that Challenge

By Dr. Debra Gilbert

Principal, Elwood Haynes Elementary

Society is demanding greater accountability for schools. P.L. 221 was passed by our Indiana legislature in response to the cry for greater accountability. Research overwhelmingly agrees that the principal is the decisive factor in predicting school success.

Even Berman and McLaughlin in 1975 stated that building level principals are the "gate-keepers of change" and observed that the level of support of the principal determines the teacher's success. Many states, including Indiana, have developed principal training programs to equip principals with the skills necessary to effectively lead our nation's schools into the 21st century. The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy has trained over 1500 building level administrators in Indiana. Is it working? Do graduates of IPLA have the skills necessary to successfully lead and reform our schools to meet today's standards for excellence?

According to my research, the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy is making a difference in the skill level of building level administrators. Indiana is just one of many states adopting Professional Standards for Building Level Administrators. The six standards, Vision of Learning; School Culture and Instructional Programs; Management; Collaboration with Family and the Community; Political, Social, Economic, Legal, and Cultural Context; and Acting with Integrity and Fairness and in an Ethical Manner are a set of performances deemed necessary for building level administrators. My research shows a significant difference in the level of mastery of these state adopted standards by principals who have graduated from the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy, in contrast to principals who have not graduated from the training.

Data for my research was gathered by surveying 100 Indiana elementary principals who have remained in their present building for the past three years. Fifty percent of the principals surveyed were IPLA graduates. Each principal was asked to select ten teachers who had also been a part of the faculty for the past three years. These teachers completed a survey assessing the principal's level of mastery of the Indiana Standards for Building Administrators using a four point scale.

The research has proven that the training provided by the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy has impacted the effectiveness of participating principals by showing a consistently higher level of mastery of the standards among IPLA graduates. In my opinion, superintendents and school boards should require their building level principals take part in this two-year professional development training. Furthermore, the state legislature and state department of education should consider expanding this leadership training to provide ongoing leadership training for principals to ensure that all schools are led by effective principals.

(continued on page 2.)



Accountability Demands Leaders Capable of Meeting Challenges

(Continued from front cover)

Leadership has a renewed emphasis at the school site. The importance of the building level principal's role as a leader of restructuring and change is increasing. Our society is demanding that leaders go beyond the traditional role of manager to become visionary change agents. The research overwhelmingly agrees that the principal plays a key role in effective change. In a 1981 NASSP publication, Lipham stated, "I have never seen a good school with a poor principal or a poor school with a good principal." Studies reflect the view that direct responsibility for improving instruction and learning rests in the hands of the school principal. Experts often emphasize that where there is an effective school, there is an effective principal and the principal has the primary role in school improvement.

Managing school change and improvement is a very complex task. In Indiana, P.L. 221 states "the principal of each school must coordinate the development of an initial three (3) year strategic and continuous school improvement and achievement plan and coordinate an annual review of the plan. The initial plan and annual review must be made with input from a committee of persons interested in the school, including administrators, teachers, parents and community and business leaders appointed by the principal. Teacher appointments to the committee must be made in accordance with IC 20-7.5-1. A plan must establish objectives for the school to achieve and must be consistent with academic standards." The improvement plan will be assessed using several indicators such as state testing, attendance, and drop out rates. Consequences for failure to improve are included in the law. Notable is the clause indicating that the "board shall establish a number of categories or designations of school improvement based on the improvement that a school makes in performance on the measures."

It seems to me that we should prepare principals to be accountable for the continuous improvement of their schools through on-going professional development. The Indiana Professional Standards are an attempt to develop criteria to judge the performance of the principals. If principals are going to be required to be at the forefront of school restructuring, it is imperative that training be required so that all principals can attain a high level of mastery of skills and proficiencies necessary to provide effective leadership for our schools.

"My research shows a significant difference in the level of mastery of these state adopted standards by principals who have graduated from the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy, in contrast to principals who have not graduated from the training."

IPLA INITIATIVES

With the increasingly complexity of the principal's job, the emergence of P.L. 221, and the common knowledge that strong leadership from the principal is an important factor in schools that work, the school principal has taken center stage. This center stage includes innumerable responsibilities. In an era of rising expectations and enhanced accountability, never before has our profession needed more support. The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy has several initiatives in place to help principals prepare for P. L. 221:

- Regular Academy – Currently serving 200 principals who attend IPLA for eighteen days over a two-year period, the Academy provides up-to-date information on such topics as the principal's role in P.L. 221, decision making using test data, how to facilitate and conduct effective meetings, designing an effective professional development program, etc.
- Winter Conference – The IPLA Alumni Association Winter Conference theme was Leadership Skills for 2001 and focused heavily on components of P.L. 221.
- Summer Team Building – Principals and their teams are invited to attend the 2001 Summer Team Building Conference, which is designed for school improvement teams. This year's conference is June 18-21, 2001 and is held in Nashville, Indiana.
- IPLA LIVE – Using streaming video, IPLA Live is an on-line professional development program. Topics for each live interaction give principals current information on P.L. 221. Archived presentations are available for viewing convenience.
- Newsletter & Web site – Current research and practitioner-written articles comprise each newsletter and web site. Both communications can be accessed at www.doe.state.in.us/ipla.

(Obtained from Dr. Gilbert's dissertation entitled, Impact of Indiana Principal Leadership Academy on "Standards for Principal's Acquired Proficiencies".)

SUMMER TEAM BUILDING INSTITUTE

An Excellent Experience for School Improvement Teams

Mark your calendars for the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy's Summer Team Building Institute 2001!

This annual four-day event is being held at the Seasons Lodge and Conference Center in Nashville, Indiana from June 18-21, 2001.



Registration is limited. School teams are selected on a first-received first-honored basis, so register now!

For more information or to register on-line, please visit our web site at www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

IPLA Staff News

The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy is happy to announce a new member to the IPLA staff.



BECCA LAMON

Becca has been selected as the new education consultant for IPLA. Becca's duties will include working on IPLA research, data collection, the web site, and the newsletter.

Becca came to IPLA from M.S.D. Wayne Township where she was most recently an 8th Grade Reading and Writing teacher at South Wayne Junior High. She also has taught English at Fulton Junior High in Wayne Township and as a kindergarten teacher in Mattoon, Illinois. She currently is in the EPPSP education administration program at Butler University as part of Group XIX. We are excited to have Becca as part of the IPLA team!

www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

Tune in to the Academy's most current professional development opportunities by logging onto IPLA Live! via the Internet! Live broadcasts, which allow interaction by e-mail are scheduled for the following dates:

February 13 - Featuring Indiana NEXT project,
March 13, April 10, May 8 and June 12



Almost Live Web Archive

If you are unable to view the live presentation, check out the IPLA Almost Live Video Archive! Features in the Archive include:

Unleashing the Power of Professional Development - Ms. Linda Cornwell
Public Law 221 - Dr. Suellen Reed

Baldrige and Continuous Improvement in Indiana
Larry Grau and Risa Regnier

Differentiated Instruction - Ms. Patti Garrett

The School Portfolio - Ms. Sharon Schultz

Special Education Update - Dr. Sandi Cole

Quality Teacher Selection - Dr. Wally Bourke

Effective Meetings - Ms. Susan Brash

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Principals of Differentiation: Providing Leadership for Today's Differentiated Learning Environment

By Richard A. Shade, Ed.D., Ball State
University and Patti Garrett, State Director
of Indiana Gifted/Talented Programs

An **educator** says... *The differentiated classroom is a learning environment that purposefully addresses the different interests, learning styles, and readiness levels (changing abilities) of a **student**.*

How does this incorporate flexible grouping of students, curriculum, instructional strategies, and student learning goals?

A **leader** says... *The differentiated school environment is a learning environment that purposefully addresses the different interests, learning styles, and readiness levels (changing abilities) of an **educator**.*

How does this incorporate team building, the establishment of culture and climate, and the changing role (continuous improvement) of leaders?

The composition of today's general education classroom consists of students with disabilities (Inclusion), students whose first language is not English (ESL), students with high abilities, students with diverse cultures, as well as growing student groups of "haves" and "have nots." All students have different readiness (changing abilities), different

Differentiation is a way of thinking about teaching and learning. It is a philosophy. As such, it is based upon a set of beliefs, including:

- The central job of schools is to maximize the capacity of each student.
- Students are more effective learners when classrooms and schools create a sense of community in which students feel significant and respected.
- Students who are the same age differ in their readiness to learn, their interests, their styles of learning, their experiences, and their life circumstances.

"Similarities make us human, differences make us individuals."
(Carol Tomlinson, 2000)



interests, and different learning profiles (how they learn).

Principals are key in providing the necessary support to help teachers implement differentiated instruction, but equally important, they can lead their teams toward making differentiation a part of the learning culture for educators, parents, and community members. The key principles to address, include:

LEADERSHIP

In a differentiated setting, the principal takes on flexible leadership roles, such as, facilitator, coach, mentor, or director. Teachers, like students, progress and grow at different rates and require different types and levels of support. One teacher may require three months to learn a new skill and another three weeks.

CULTURE

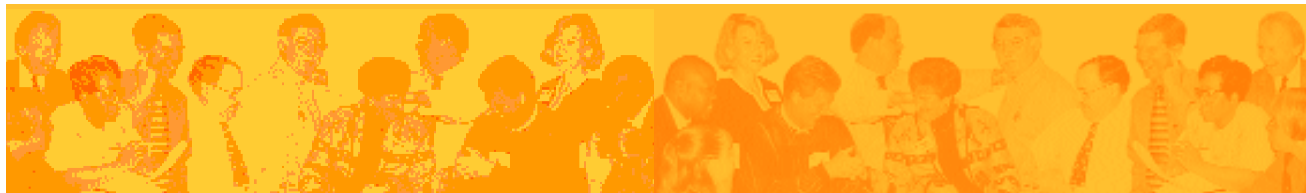
Differentiation by definition requires that we support safe learning environments that are open to inquiry, flexibility, risk taking, and choice. Principals supporting differentiation accept and actively encourage these kinds of behaviors in their educators and students.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM (SIT) DEVELOPMENT

To make differentiation relevant ("walk the talk"), use teachers in leadership roles according to their areas of strength as determined by their interests, readiness, and learning styles. For example, if you have a teacher on your staff with expertise and interest in data analysis, allow him/her to be the statistician or data collector for any such work. Some will be able to assist as the public relations specialist, newsletter editor, science specialist, etc. Decide on the list of support roles you need and let teachers choose the way they will support your team.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Hire educators using assessments for flexibility, risk taking, collaboration skills, and acceptance of all diversity including learning, change,



COMMUNICATION: Communication takes on a new marketing role when addressing change of philosophy and practice. Request that all educators choose the way they will assist in the marketing of differentiation as a philosophy, goal, and practice in your school through newsletters, web sites, vision/mission statements, magnets, coasters, banners, stationary, etc. Be prepared for teamwork and ingenuity as they develop their products when given choice!

PARENTS

Sponsor parent awareness sessions and activities to learn the philosophy of differentiation and new parenting skills based upon student differences, choice, and responsibility. Emphasize that differentiation supports student responsibility and self-direction in learning. Work through your own value system and belief system and then proactively share with your staff and the parents of the students at your school.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff development is both self-directed and targeted towards the goals of the school-wide improvement team in a differentiated learning environment. Decide what skills and attitudes you want educators to have and support numerous and various pathways to get there. Provide teachers with choice in the ways they share new knowledge with colleagues. Let them demonstrate learning according to their readiness, interest, and learning style preferences... be prepared for creativity!

ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT

The implementation of the practice of differentiation also requires the differentiation of supervision. Provide teachers with many different levels of assessment according to their readiness, interests and learning styles. Let age and experience of educators not dictate how we assess and support their needs as learners.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Differentiation is a philosophy, as well as a teaching approach, that supports the goals of 1) standards based instruction, 2) maximizing the capacity of each student in real learning environments and 3) maximizing the capacity of each educator in real learning environments. It involves looking at things just a little bit "differently".

To see a graphic of this article please visit the IPLA homepage: www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

To view additional resources visit the Gifted/Talented homepage: www.doe.state.in.us/gt

Technology Tip

How safe are the files in your office. Hopefully, they are behind a locked cabinet, but what about the files on your computer. How safe are they? The world's best security system is only as good as its weakest link. Below are some password and security tips to think about.

- If you remember nothing else: Passwords are case sensitive. Joe2 is not the same as JOE2 or joE2.
- Do not use your children's names, your Social Security Number, birthday, or my favorite, your dog's name for passwords.
- Use a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols, bearing in mind that certain symbols may not work. Keep in mind the case-sensitive issues, but use them to your advantage.
- Do not share your passwords. If others need to use your machines, ask the technology coordinator about Guest Log-On with restricted privileges that expire within a fixed period.
- Change your passwords occasionally -- especially when you find a helpful student hovering around your desk frequently.
- If you have different passwords, don't write them down. If you have trouble, write a clue if you must, but do not be obvious.

Computers are a wonderful addition to the management of a school but please be aware of their downfalls, too. To sum it up, please take security seriously.

Excepts taken from article originally published in the "Well Connected Educator" at Techlearning.com.

Mr. Bateman, the article's author, currently teaches in a maximum security facility for Juveniles in Ventura, CA. He writes and lectures on Computer and Technology for educators as well as being the coordinator for the Computer Using Fellows publication, (CUF-Links) and new webmaster for the South Coast Writers Project at U.C Santa Barbara.

Quote
Corner

**"Only those who will
risk going too far
can possibly find out
how far one can go."**

T.S. Elliot

Quote
Corner



Four Blocks: A Balanced Approach to Reading

By Libby Turner, Integrating Curriculum and Technology Specialist
Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation

“Can I stay in at recess to finish my writing?” “This is a great book! Could I please take it home tonight?” These are questions asked by students who are learning to read in Four Blocks classrooms.

WHAT IS FOUR BLOCKS?

Four Blocks is a multi-leveled, multi-method approach to teaching reading. Developed by Patricia Cunningham of Wake Forest University, the Four Blocks framework incorporates the four most popular approaches to teaching reading (phonics, basal, literature, and language experience/writing). Recognizing each approach has strengths and that all children do not learn in the same way, Four Blocks organizes reading/language arts instruction into four thirty-minute blocks — Guided Reading, Self-Selected Reading, Working With Words, and Writing.

GUIDED READING BLOCK

A basal is the most popular tool used to introduce students to a variety of literature. Each day, the teacher:

- Builds prior knowledge, discusses vocabulary in context and provides a comprehension purpose for reading.
- Supports the students while they read the selection in a variety of heterogeneous grouping structures.
- Closes the block with an activity that reinforces the comprehension purpose.

SELF-SELECTED READING BLOCK

The Self-Selected Reading Block allows students to choose what they would like to read. Each day the:

- Teacher reads aloud.
- Students read silently while the teacher conferences with selected students.
- Students share their books through some type of book talk format.

WORKING WITH WORDS BLOCK

During this block, students actively review high frequency words and participate in a phonics-based activity. Each day students:

- Chant and write the high frequency Word Wall words.
- Participate in activities that help students decode and spell words.

WRITING BLOCK

For some students, their own writing is what they enjoy reading most. Daily, the Writing Block has three segments:

- A mini-lesson where the teacher models real writing and incorporates writing development and English skills into the mini-lessons.



- Independent student writing and individualized teacher conferences.
- Student sharing time where peers offer suggestions.

WHAT AGE-LEVELS PARTICIPATE IN FOUR BLOCKS?

Originally intended to address the needs of beginning readers, Four Blocks has become so popular that a kindergarten variation, Building Blocks, has been developed which incorporates the Four Blocks components in a much more flexible, developmentally appropriate format. Adaptations have also been made for a Big Blocks framework in the intermediate and middle level grades. Here the primary differences occur in the Working With Words Block where the focus turns to decoding and learning the roots, prefixes and suffixes of polysyllabic words.

WHAT TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ARE NECESSARY TO BEGIN FOUR BLOCKS?

Cunningham, along with colleagues Dottie Hall and Cheryl Sigmon, have published numerous books and videos and offer workshops to assist teachers in getting Four Blocks started. Their schedules and publications can be obtained at either www.wfu.edu/~cunningh/fourblocks or www.teachers.net

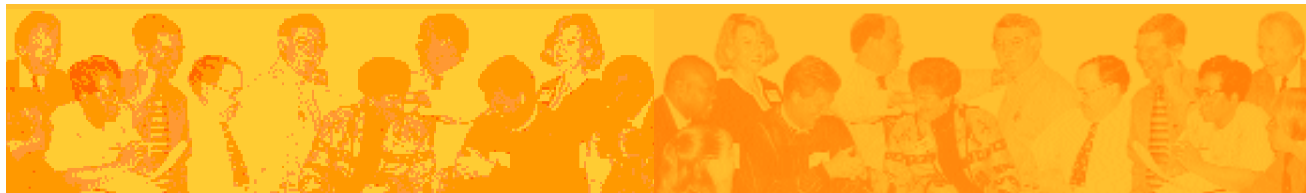
The Four Blocks initiative has been widely supported in Indiana through the Department of Education. Contact the IDOE to learn about their training opportunities at www.doe.state.in.us.

HOW CAN FOUR BLOCKS BE SUSTAINED?

Seasoned Four Blocks teachers need time to share, while new Four Blocks teachers need time to observe. The Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation offered a unique opportunity for approximately five hundred educators last summer. For one week, teachers had the opportunity to observe Four Blocks teachers teach in the morning. Then in the afternoon, Four Blocks Coaches debriefed with the teachers and offered intensive Four Blocks instruction. To continue the dialogue, these coaches lead after school Four Blocks discussion groups and model in teachers' classrooms throughout the year.

WHY DO MOST TEACHERS LIKE FOUR BLOCKS?

It just makes sense! The Four Blocks framework allows teachers to give their students a balanced reading diet each day.



IPLA Alumni Message

By Don Setterlof, President



What is the IPLA Alumni Board?
What does the Alumni Board do?
These are two typical questions that I am asked. Let me share with you background information that I believe will answer these questions.



The IPLA Alumni Board plays a most important role in the overall success of IPLA and all alumni members. The IPLA Alumni Board is comprised of a representative from each IPLA group. Contact between the individuals in each group and the Board is facilitated by the Board representative. This representation provides excellent basis for discussion, future planning, and a belief system that promotes the mission of IPLA.

Under the direction of the IPLA Alumni Board, the annual Winter Conference is planned and hosted. This January conference is becoming one of the best professional renewal opportunities for building administrators. This year's conference, "Leadership Skills for 2001", was one of the best conferences that we have had.

It is also the IPLA Alumni Board that allocates funds that support the Aspiring Principals Scholarship Program. We are now awarding six scholarships per year to candidates who are enrolled in both traditional and non-traditional administrative programs.

The annual Summer Team Building week is growing in numbers and is considered to be an invaluable professional development activity. The IPLA Alumni Board supports this week each summer. What a difference this experience has made in so many staffs throughout the state of Indiana.

I trust that you will agree that your Alumni Board carries out many important supportive functions for its members. It is truly an honor for me to be serving as president of the Alumni Board.

Don Setterlof

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

PresidentDon Setterlof
Vice-PresidentLarry Norris
SecretaryCathy Dyer
TreasurerTroy Watkins
IPLA Executive Director ...Deb Lecklider
IPLA Associate Director ...Colleen Moran

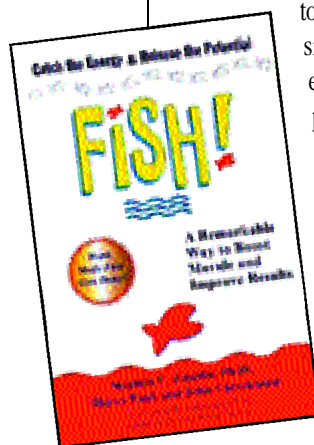
Books for Leaders

Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results

by Stephen C. Lundin Ph.D.

Originally caught on film by John Christensen, this tale is based on the story of the Pike Place Fish market in Seattle, WA. This book promises

to give managers, in all professions, tips on how to increase employee retention and motivate people to take pride in what they do. You will learn how to take a toxic school environment and create a fun and positive place where everyone wants to be. This book is a quick read that can immediately be implemented into your daily routine.

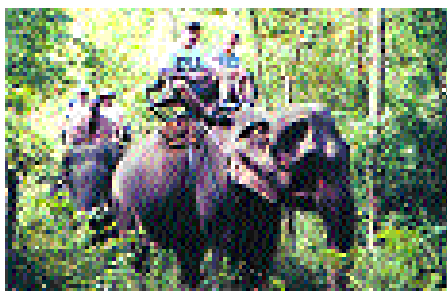


Where in the World is IPLA?



The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy has far reaching effects. How far, is the question. IPLA is nationally recognized for its efforts in the leadership field but now IPLA can be recognized for all to see. Have you seen IPLA somewhere in the world? If so, send us your photos today to Becca Lamon at IPLA, Department of Education, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-

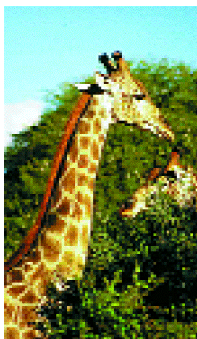
2798.



Long time friend and process observer of IPLA, **Bill McColly**, found time to think about Indiana principals while riding the back of an elephant in Thailand this past December. Accompanying him is his wife, Mickey McColly.



IPLA is becoming so well known that even babies are hoping to join our ranks. Eight-month-old Kate Sparrow, daughter of IPLA facilitator **Ellen Sparrow**, is ready one day to become a principal. We hope that she achieves her goal!



ipla

**Indiana Principal
Leadership Academy**

Room 229, State House
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798

CALENDAR

Feb. 14-15

Academy Sessions

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites

Groups 33, 34, 35 and 36

Feb. 16

Group 33 Graduation

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites

Apr. 18-19

P.L. 221 Conference

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites

Apr. 18-20

Academy Sessions and Graduation

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites

Group 34

Apr. 25-26

Academy Sessions

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites

Groups 35 and 36

June 18-21

Summer Team Building 2001

Nashville, IN

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